

Message Text

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45

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 EUR-25 EA-11 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01

PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-15 AID-20 ACDA-19 RSR-01 /170 W

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R 100923Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 406

INFO AMCONSUL KARACHI

AMCONSUL LAHORE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PK

SUBJ: ELECTION OF PRESIDENT AND ASSEMBLY SPEAKERS, POLITICAL
MANEUVERING

REF: ISLAMABAD 6367

SUMMARY FAZAL ELAHI ELECTED PRESIDENT AUGUST 10 AS
EXPECTED. SINDHI WOMAN NOMINATED BY PEOPLES' PARTY FOR
DEPUTY SPEAKER OUSTING CURRENT DEPUTY FROM QAIYUM MUSLIM
LEAGUE. WIDESPREAD RUMOR THAT QAIYUM GROUP WILL MERGE
WITH PPP. BHUTTO IS MEETING MULTITUDE OF POLITICAL
FIGURES PRESUMABLY RE CHANGES OCCASIONED BY COMING
INTO FORCE OF CONSTITUTION. END SUMMARY.

1. HAIR-SPLITTING LAWYERS FROM POLITICAL OPPOSITION
SCORED SYMBOLIC VICTORY OVER PEOPLES' PARTY LAWYERS BY
FINDING DEFECT IN NOMINATION PAPERS OF PPP NOMINEE FOR
PRESIDENT, FAZAL ELAHI. OPPOSITION DISCOVERED THAT
ELAHI HAD NOT SUBMITTED CODUMENTS PROVING HE WAS
REGISTERED VOTER, REQUIREMENT UNDER RULES. LAHORE HIGH
COURT REFUSED TO CONSIDER MATTER WHILE CHIEF ELECTION
COMMISSIONER RULED THAT OMISSION WAS NITPICK SINCE ELAHI
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WAS SITTING MEMBER OF ASSEMBLY AND SPEAKER, THEREFORE

PRIMA FACIE WAS REGISTERED VOTER SINCE ONLY THOSE REGISTERED COULD CONTEST FOR ASSEMBLY IN FIRST INSTANCE. HAVING DISPOSED OF THIS PROBLEM, ASSEMBLY TOGETHER WITH SENATE AUGUST 10 ELECTED ELAHI AS PRESIDENT. ELAHI RECEIVED 139 VOTES, AMIRZADA KAHN 45 OF TOTAL 191 ELEGIBLE VOTES. FAROOQ ALI ELECTED UNOPPOSED AS SPEAKER AUGUST 9 WHEN OPPOSITION DECIDED NOT TO ENTER CANDIDATE AS GESTURE TOWARDS IMPARTIALITY OF SPEAKER'S POSITION.

2. IN SURPRISE DEVELOPMENT, PEOPLE'S PARTY AND ALLIED PARLIAMENTARY GROUPS HAVE SELECTED MRS. ASHRAF ABBASI, PPP SINDHI MNA FROM LARKANA, BHUTTO'S ANCESTRAL HOME, AS GOVERNMENT CANDIDATE FOR DEPUTY SPEAKER TO REPLACE PRESENT QAIYUM MUSLIM LEAGUE DEPUTY SPEAKER HANIF. ABBASI IS BELIEVED TO BE FIRST WOMAN EVER NOMINATED FOR SENIOR POSITION IN ANY PAKISTAN CENTRAL OR PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLY. HER NOMINATION MAY HAVE BEEN CONCEIVED PARTLY AT GESTURE TO SECULARISM AND WOMEN VOTERS AND PARTLY TO OFFSET EXPECTED NOMINATION OF WOMAN CANDIDATE BY OPPOSITION. OPPOSITION HAS NOMINATED NAP MNA JENNIFER MUSA FROM BALUCHISTAN. AS IN PREVIOUS ASSEMBLY TESTS OF STRENGTH, PPP SHOULD WIN HANDS DOWN IN ELECTION WHICH WILL TAKE PLACE ON AUGUST 11.

3. PPP MOVE DUMPING HANIF HAS GIVEN RISE TO REVIVAL OF LONG-TIME RUMOR THAT QAIYUM MUSLIM LEAGUE WILL BE MERGED WITH PEOPLES' PARTY AFTER LAPSE OF POLITICAL PARTIES ACT ON AUGUST 14. ALSO RUMORED THAT MUSLIM LEAGUE PRESIDENT QAIYUM KHAN, WHO IS CURRENT HOME AND KASHMIR AFFAIRS MINISTER, MAY BE EASED OUT OF PORTFOLIO AND PERHAPS GIVEN AMBASSADORIAL APPOINTMENT. SHOULD BOTH ACTIONS TAKE PLACE, PPP POSITION IN NORTHWEST FRONTIER PROVINCE WOULD BE ENHANCED AND REMOVAL OF QAIYUM FROM DOMESTIC POLITICAL SCENE WOULD VASTLY FACILITATE ESTABLISHMENT MODUS VIVENDI BETWEEN QAIYUM'S BITTER ENEMY, WALI KHAN OF NATIONAL AWAMI PARTY, AND BHUTTO. AT PRESENT, QAIYUM LEAGUE ODD MEN OUT IN CHANGES OCCURRING AT FEDERAL LEVEL; YUSUF KHATTAK APPARENTLY LOBBIED UNSUCCESSFULLY FOR SPEAKERSHIP, WHILE HANIF RELIEVED OF HIS POST.

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4. BHUTTO IS EVIDENTLY HOLDING MEETINGS WITH POLITICIANS OF VARIETY OF POLITICAL PERSUASIONS. ONE APPARENT GOAL IS TO ENLIST INTO PPP THOSE MNAS FROM OTHER POLITICAL PARTIES (COUNCIL LEAGUE, JAMIATUL-ULEMA-I-ISLAM, JAMIATUL-ULEMA-I-PAKISTAN, CONVENTION LEAGUE) WHO HAVE SUPPORTED PPP IN ASSEMBLY. ANOTHER OBJECTIVE MAY BE TO SORT OUT CHANGES IN MINISTERIAL PORTFOLIOS AND

PPP OFFICES. EMBASSY HAS NO INFORMATION ON
WHETHER BHUTTO ATTEMPTING, AS PART OF CURRENT INTENSE
NEGOTIATING, REVIVE POSSIBILITY OF COALITION NAP/PPP
GOVERNMENT IN BALUCHISTAN. WALI KHAN TOLD CHARGE AUGUST
4 HE WOULD NOT TALK WITH BHUTTO UNTIL SEVEN PRE-CONDITIONS
DRAWN UP BY UNITED DEMOCRATIC FRONT (ISLAMABAD 6137)
ARE MET. HOWEVER, KARACHI REPORTS MODERATE NAP BALUCH
FIGURES INCLUDING MPA PRINCE KARIM OF KALAT NOW IN RAWALPINDI.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CABINET, CENTRAL LEGISLATURE, LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 AUG 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973ISLAMA06461
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: ISLAMABAD
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730846/aaaabhrl.tel
Line Count: 125
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: ISLAMABAD 6367
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 04 JAN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <04-Jan-2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <18-Jan-2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ELECTION OF PRESIDENT AND ASSEMBLY SPEAKERS, POLITICAL MANEUVERING
TAGS: PINT, PK, PPP, NAP, (ELAHI, FAZAL), (ALI, FAROOQ), (ABBASI, ASHRAF), (KHAN, WALI)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005